

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY AUGUST 25, 2009

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2009—10 REGULAR SESSION

## Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 91

**Introduced by Assembly Member Lieu  
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Smyth)**

August 18, 2009

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 91—Relative to pet adoption.

### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

ACR 91, as amended, Lieu. Adopt a Shelter Pet Month.

This measure would declare September 2009 to be Adopt a Shelter Pet Month and would encourage pet adoption and raise awareness about overpopulation in animal shelters.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, This measure would declare the month of  
2 September 2009 as Adopt a Shelter Pet Month, in order to  
3 encourage pet adoption at local animal shelters and raise awareness  
4 about the strain felt by local animal shelters because of the faltering  
5 economy and an overpopulation of pet animals, *including dogs,*  
6 *cats, birds, rabbits, and reptiles*; and  
7 ~~WHEREAS, In 2008, the annual number of dogs and cats~~  
8 ~~entering California municipal shelters increased 14.6 percent~~  
9 ~~statewide from 2004, an increase from 729,238 to 835,642; and~~  
10 *WHEREAS, The annual number of dogs and cats entering*  
11 *California municipal shelters increased from 725,046 in 2007 to*  
12 *811,818 in 2008, according to the most recent report issued by*  
13 *the State Department of Public Health on August 17, 2009; and*

1 WHEREAS, Nearly half of these animals were euthanized  
2 because the animals were not reclaimed by their owners or adopted  
3 by new owners; and

4 WHEREAS, The State Department of Public Health reported  
5 that in 2008 the total number of euthanized cats and dogs in  
6 municipal shelters was ~~433,512~~ 429,987, an already high number  
7 that did not reflect the animals that were euthanized in private  
8 shelters or rescue groups; and

9 WHEREAS, In most instances these dogs and cats are young,  
10 healthy, and friendly animals that are euthanized simply because  
11 there are not enough good homes for them, making it more  
12 important than ever to help local animal shelters by adopting a pet;  
13 and

14 *WHEREAS, Many other pet animals, such as birds, rabbits, and*  
15 *tortoises, have also been relinquished at alarmingly high rates to*  
16 *animal shelters; and*

17 WHEREAS, Pet ownership has been shown to promote a healthy  
18 lifestyle. According to the United States Centers for Disease  
19 Control and Prevention, a pet can encourage better health, fitness,  
20 and mental wellness. Pets have the ability to decrease blood  
21 pressure, cholesterol levels, and triglyceride levels, and to reduce  
22 depression. Pets can also increase a person's physical activity and  
23 improve his or her socializing skills; and

24 WHEREAS, Studies indicate that children who interact with  
25 pets have higher self-esteem and enhanced social skills, and can  
26 cope better with their emotions. Doctors often use pet animals for  
27 therapeutic activities with both children and adults to help them  
28 overcome traumatic events, physical handicaps, and psychological  
29 illnesses; and

30 WHEREAS, Adopting a pet from a shelter and caring for that  
31 animal for the rest of its life is a responsible way to help  
32 California's animal population, rather than contributing to its  
33 crowding; and

34 WHEREAS, It is important to consider the many benefits of  
35 shelter adoption before purchasing a pet from a traditional vendor.  
36 Animal shelters are nonprofits and are exclusively focused on the  
37 best interests of animals; and

38 WHEREAS, Shelter animals are often healthier, smarter, and  
39 have better temperaments. Pets adopted at animal shelters are  
40 vaccinated and proper care information is provided at the time of

1 adoption. Animal shelters generally provide spay and neuter  
2 services prior to adoption, which are the best ways to help reduce  
3 pet overpopulation; and

4 WHEREAS, Animal shelters are focused on animal placement,  
5 which is why most shelters provide low-cost adoptions so that  
6 everyone can have the opportunity to bring a loving pet into his  
7 or her home; and

8 WHEREAS, California and the nation have an enormous  
9 problem with animal overpopulation. In California alone, there  
10 are hundreds of thousands of animals in shelters needing homes.  
11 As the economy declines, more and more people are losing their  
12 homes and being left with no other option than to leave their pets  
13 at a shelter; and

14 WHEREAS, The State of California, along with numerous cities  
15 and counties, is experiencing unprecedented budget deficits. Budget  
16 reductions have the potential to add an increased strain on local  
17 animal shelter systems, threatening the lives of thousands of  
18 animals. One consequence of our budget deficits could be a  
19 reduction in the number of days a shelter is required to hold an  
20 animal before it is euthanized, resulting in less time for adoption  
21 of healthy animals; and

22 WHEREAS, The existing pet overpopulation problem,  
23 exacerbated by a spike in animals being turned in due to the  
24 challenging economy and a reduction in holding periods in local  
25 shelters, will negatively impact California's companion animals;  
26 and

27 WHEREAS, Adopting a pet from a local animal shelter is one  
28 way Californians can make a difference not only in their own lives,  
29 but also in the life of an animal in need; now, therefore, be it

30 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*  
31 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature declares the month of  
32 September 2009 as Adopt a Shelter Pet Month, encouraging all  
33 Californians to save a life at a local shelter; and be it further

34 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies  
35 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.